

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Sun-Dor Co

Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center

Sun-Dor Goes Door To Door To Increase Sales

Client Profile:

Sun-Dor Co., based in Newton, Kansas, produces hand-crafted doors for high-end homes. The company sells its one-of-a-kind doors, built to architectural specifications, through a select group of building supply companies. The company currently employs 15 people.

Situation:

Because each Sun-Dor door is hand-built by old-world craftsmen, the company can't expand its business too rapidly and still maintain its reputation for quality and on-time delivery. Contracts with just three or four new dealers could triple its business. Sun-Dor wanted to carefully increase its sales without jeopardizing the quality that has become its trademark. Sun-Dor contacted the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC), a NIST MEP affiliate, for help.

Solution:

Rather than run an expensive ad in a high-end design or architecture magazine, MAMTC recommended a more personal approach--qualifying individual dealers one at a time. The organization approached a college in each target area and enlisted the help of a marketing student. That student was then asked to drive around to the construction sites of high-end homes and record the names of the lumber yards and building suppliers making deliveries.

Armed with that information, MAMTC helped write an honest, open, personalized letter to each potential customer, explaining how the company operated. The letter also stated that Sun-Dor would like to visit with them about becoming a select dealer and told them that they would be receiving a package in a few days. Shortly after sending the letter, the lumber company received a nice box filled with products including jams, jellies, and snack foods that are produced in Kansas. Inside the box, a message that stated, "Good things come from Kansas, including Sun-Dor doors." The box, made from wheat straw, extended the message even further.

As a third follow-up, MAMTC sent each lumber supplier a set of photographs showing craftsmen at work, along with photos of some of the products. Sun-Dor is pleased with the personal marketing campaign and anticipates growing its distribution network to include three or four more building supply companies as a result of this effort.

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Results:

Developed and executed personalized marketing campaign.

Increased awareness of the Sun-Dor name and products.

Anticipating sales increases through relationships with three or four qualified supply companies.

Testimonial:

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